LIZ SMITH

Four Hot Backstage Topics

NEW YORK—"Withholding is considered the major metaphor of the movie business," writes veteran reporter Paul Rosenfield.

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The stars may be "withholding" when it comes to their innermost privacy, but the Golden Globes prove that being a hard-to-get recluse is out. Even the most important holdouts have recently learned a lesson. Why else would Warren Beatty and Barbra Streisand show up? Because they have realized that appearances and *La Publicité* are good for their work.

Beauty

The three hot Globes topics were: Bette Midler's emotional acceptance speech (she won best actress in a comedy or musical) and her even more emotional and bitter remarks backstage . . . Barbra Streisand's *not* winning for best director . . . and the question, will "Beauty and the Beast" be the first animated feature ever to win a best picture Oscar?

Wait! Let's make that four hot topics, the last being . . . Can it be possible, could it happen, will the earth stand still—and on Oscar night we'll find the controversial and much-discussed, much-hated "JFK" going the distance as best picture and best director?

First, let's not worry too much about Barbra, yet. Remember, she walked away from the Globes with a handful of trophies for "Yentl" and came up with nothing from the Academy Awards that year. The Academy *will* nominate her. Whether she wins is another matter entirely. (Barbra didn't look upset. In fact, she seemed to be taking lots of justifiable pride and pleasure in Nick Nolte's best actor win for "The Prince of Tides.")

Disney is pushing hard to get "Beauty and the Beast" nominated in the best picture category. By the time the Oscar nominations come out late next month, the movie's gross will be hovering near the magic $100-million mark. That kind of success is difficult to ignore. My prediction? "Beauty" will make history as the first animated film ever to be nominated, but it won't win.

And now for the divine and miserable Bette. Girlfriend, lighten up! Shrug your shoulders. Of course the "failure" of "For the Boys" is a big disappointment and a surprise to most of us who thought it would go like gangbusters. But that's show biz!

Critically, this movie garnered for Midler some of the most spectacular reviews of her career. She could be nominated for an Oscar. Perhaps if Fox had exploited the more serious anti-war aspect of "For the Boys" and explained up front that there was no romantic relationship, the public wouldn't have been so disappointed. Fox marketed this like an old-fashioned Betty Grable musical, which it turned out *not* to be.

As for the hot, hot, hot emergence of "JFK"—super-emphasized by Oliver Stone winning the Golden Globe as best director—I won't say much more here. I have already said this is a great film, flawed but fabulous. So much was written over the weekend, and "JFK" was certainly the topic and argument of every single dinner party I attended in the last 60 hours, so I know anything can happen when those directors sit down with their ballots.

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